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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [RW](#)
SUBJECT: RWANDANS DEMAND CHANGES TO JOINT GOVERNANCE
ASSESSMENT

REF: A. KIGALI 204
[1](#)B. KIGALI 113

Classified By: CDA Cheryl J. Sim, reason 1.4 (B/D)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: Joint Governance Assessment (JGA) Steering Committee Co-Chairperson and Minister of Local Government Protais Musoni called an urgent meeting of the Committee March 26 to discuss the Government of Rwanda's (GOR) concerns with the first draft of the assessment. Ministers and other GOR officials took turns criticizing the document while members of the diplomatic and donor communities as well as the consultants responsible for the assessment took pains to defend it and argued for an end product that was both independent and credible. The meeting concluded on a tense note, with Minister of Finance and Economic Planning James Musoni threatening to pull out of the JGA process if it was tied to budget support or "compromised Rwanda's sovereignty," and suggesting Rwanda might not accept conditional budget support. The GOR does not appear to be willing to accept a report that differs from the GOR's own historical perspective. As a result, the donor community is becoming increasingly pessimistic that the JGA process will result in a credible report. End summary.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Opening the March 26 emergency meeting of the JGA Steering Committee, Committee Co-Chair and Minister of Local Government Protais Musoni (World Bank representative Victoria Kwakwa is the other co-chair) described the GOR's "strong reservations" with the JGA report and the need for GOR ownership of it. Ministers and other GOR officials present then proceeded to criticize elements of the report, repeating and elaborating on their initial negative reactions (ref A). Their greatest area of concern was what they described as "politically motivated factual inaccuracies" in the report, particularly in sections relating to Rwandan history. Without citing any examples, Ombudsman Tito Rutaremara claimed he found 103 items to contest, and lamented the lack of "scientific evidence" for the report's claims. He then called for the inclusion of the GOR's response to the report in the document itself. Minister of Finance and Economic Planning James Musoni revived his earlier arguments against the report, suggesting there might be a need for a separate forum with donors in which to discuss Rwanda's history.

[1](#)3. (C) Minister Musoni further said the presence in the report of quotations from Freedom House, Human Rights Watch and Filip Reyntjens among others who are generally critical of the GOR would constitute the GOR's endorsement of their points of view and argued for their removal. With tensions

rising in the room, Minister of Justice Tharcisse Karugarama asked participants "to remain friendly," but he too criticized the report as not factually correct. He said the report should "avoid areas of historical contention" and instead suggested that a "scientific measure against international standards" would be a better approach for the document. He ended by mentioning his problems with the International Legal Assistance Consortium report (ILAC - ref B) and asked the consultants to rewrite the JGA report. Minister of Local Government Protais Musoni pragmatically called for "an effective program at the end of the JGA process," and a useful baseline. Other officials, including the newly-appointed Minister of Information Louise Mushikiwabo and head of the National Commission for Human Rights Sylvie Kayitesi also added their voices to the choir of GOR discontent.

¶4. (C) Members of the diplomatic and donor community once again found themselves defending the report and the independence of its authors. The Belgian Ambassador began by citing Ambassador Arietti's comments in the earlier meeting on the report (the report needs to be credible and acceptable to the international community to be of any value - ref A), then said the report was the result of a team effort. He suggested that "strong divergences" between the GOR and donors on the report should not have an impact on the report itself, but rather be shown in a separate document. He emphasized the importance of the independence of the assessment team, and the need for the report to be forward looking and focused on the indicators. The Dutch Charge similarly expressed support for the JGA process and praised the report as balanced and sound in its provision of historical context.

¶5. (C) The Swedish Head of Mission suggested that while the GOR needs the confidence of international investors that a credible report can encourage, perhaps historical information could be included elsewhere. He pointed out the need for some historical content in the JGA process, citing the GOR's own tendency to dismiss analyses of Rwanda that lack such contextual elements. The DFID country representative strongly defended the independence of the consultants, and said all external comments should only be incorporated into the report at their discretion. She cautioned the GOR against pushing for a "watered-down" report that would not be useful in addressing Rwanda's detractors.

¶6. (C) During the course of the discussion, a representative of the consultant team that drafted the JGA report became increasingly frustrated by the litany of criticism being directed against his team's efforts and the lack of opportunity he was initially given to respond. The consultant defended his team's neutrality and asserted they had no political agenda. He acknowledged the GOR's concerns with the report's treatment of Rwandan history, its sequence, and some quotations used. He welcomed written GOR and donor comments, which he noted had not been received during the comment period, and expressed willingness to address concerns, including possibly removing certain historical material or quotations while maintaining historical context and a range of balanced sources.

¶7. (C) As the meeting drew to a close, the discussion touched on the importance of the JGA indicators for budget support from some donors. James Musoni threatened to pull out of the entire JGA process if it was tied to budget support or otherwise "compromised Rwanda's sovereignty," and suggested that Rwanda might not accept conditional budget support. In a firm reply, the DFID country representative maintained the need for the indicators for continued funding support. (Note: DFID is Rwanda's largest budget support donor. End note.)

¶8. (C) Comment: To the apparent dismay of many of the donor participants, the "urgent meeting" of the JGA Steering Committee did not introduce new information or push the process forward, but only provided the GOR with another

opportunity to express its unhappiness with the JGA draft report. While it may just be posturing, the GOR does not appear to be willing to accept a report that differs from the GOR's own historical perspective. As a result, the donor community is becoming increasingly pessimistic that the JGA process will result in a credible report. The next draft is due out at the end of April. End comment.

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